Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Telephone 01-

Your reference

Our reference

Date 9 September 1987

Mr Salem Azzam
Secretary General
Islamic Council
16 Grosvenor Crescent
London SW1 7EP

Dear M. Azzam,

I have been asked to reply to your further letter of 28 August addressed to the Prime Minister.

As explained in my earlier letter to you of 11 May, the Government are concerned about any violations of human rights wherever they occur. The Tunisian Government are well aware of the importance which our Government attaches to respect for human rights.

We shall, of course, continue to follow closely the present trials in Tunisia.

Yours sincerely,
D Thomson

D Thomson
Near East & North
Africa Department

المجلس الاسلامي
Islamic Council

28 August, 1987

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street
London SW1.

Dear Prime Minister,

Kindly refer to May 11, 1987 letter signed by Mr. D. Thomson of Near East and North Africa Affairs in reply to my letter of 14th April addressed to you on the subject of human rights in Tunisia.

According to the information received by the Islamic Council, the Tunisian authorities started trials of a large number of the opposition, belonging principally to the Islamic Tendency, on August 27, 1987. It is widely believed that the accused are being tried on trumped up charges and will be given draconian punishments in show trials. It is also believed that the accused are the victims of the regime's wrath because they dared to struggle for their human rights . The charges brought up against them are, inter alia, that they were involved in the recent bombing incidents in tourist hotels in Tunisia, charges which were denied by the accused. Credence to the denials is lent by categorical admission by a small organisation that it was responsible for the

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bombings, which, it said, was in retaliation against the execution of two of its members by the Tunisian regime.

There are widespread fears that the authorities in Tunisia are determined to execute some of the top leaders of Islamic Tendency, like Professor Rashid al Ghanoushi, and sentence others to long term imprisonment.

Madam Prime Minister, you and your Government have stood firmly for human rights everywhere. The Council will greatly appreciate if you would use your good offices and international standing to secure justice for the accused and respect for human rights in Tunisia .

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

Salem Azzam
Secretary General